

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 83 – Brevity of Life Through Job Answering Eliphaz Again (Job 14-16)

1. How does Job describe the length of a man's life?

“(1) Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. (2) He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not” (Job 14:1-2).

We know that Job is right in saying life is short (**Proverbs 27:1** and **James 4:13-14**). His analogy of the flower is good (**I Peter 1:23-25**).

2. What is Job questioning in Job 14:3?

“And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee” (Job 14:3)?

In light of verses 1-2 Job is questioning whether or not he is worthy to be looked on and judged by the greater one, being God. Job thinks he's being punished by God and has asked God what sins he has committed (**Job 13:23-24**), so he thinks himself unworthy to stand before God (cf. **Ezra 9:15**). Consider **Psalms 76:7** and **Psalms 143:1-2** in thought with this verse.

3. Does Job think highly of man's work in this lifetime?

No, he thinks life is a wasted thing. He thinks God has set boundaries that keep man from accomplishing much. He asks God to turn from man (back off). Notice: *“(4) Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. (5) Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass; (6) **Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.** (7) For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. (8) Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; (9) Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. (10) **But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?** (11) As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: (12) **So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep” (Job 14:4-12).***

Sounds a lot like **Job 7:9-11**.

4. Does Job fully understand what happens to man at death (cf. Job 14:12-14)?

No, Job surely is ignorant to what happens with man when he leaves this world, working his mind to thinking that life ends and may even reoccur on earth in a time when God's wrath would end. Truth is, life does not end and will not be returned to earth (**Ecclesiastes 12:7**, **Luke 16:19-31**, **Luke 23:39-43**, **Acts 2:22-32**, and **Hebrews 9:27**).

5. Does Job recognize the need to answer the calls of his maker?

Yes: *“Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands” (Job 14:15).*

6. Does Job feel like God is just observing him and making a case against him?

Yes: “(16) For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin? (17) My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity” (**Job 14:16-17**).

7. Does Job feel God is with or against mankind?

Job thinks God is against man: “(18) And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place. (19) The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and **thou destroyest the hope of man.** (20) **Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.** (21) His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them. (22) But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn” (**Job 14:18-22**).

8. What are the right answers to Eliphaz’s questions (Job 15:2-3)?

“(1) Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said, (2) Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind? (3) Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good” (**Job 15:2-3**)?

One thing is, Job has argued in the past that he is knowledgeable (**Job 12:3, Job 13:2, and Job 13:6**).

a. No, a wise man WOULD NOT utter vain knowledge (**Job 35:16, Job 38:1-2, and Romans 10:1-3**).

b. No, a wise man WOULD NOT fill his belly with the east wind; empty words; [Job 6:26 for the reference to the wind] (**Proverbs 18:20**).

c. No, a wise man WOULD NOT reason with unprofitable talk or use speeches that can do not good (**II Timothy 2:14**).

9. Does Eliphaz think that Job has cast off his fear of God?

Yes, he feels Job is not in fear of God and that is causing him not to communicate with the Lord: “Yea, thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God” (**Job 15:4**).

10. According to Eliphaz, what is condemning Job?

His own mouth: “(5) For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty. (6) Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testify against thee” (**Job 15:5-6**).

By words we can certainly condemn ourselves (**Matthew 12:34-37**).

11. Does Eliphaz think that Job’s words show him to think that he (Job) is greater than everyone else?

Yes: “(7) Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills? (8) Hast thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself? (9) What knowest thou, that we know not? what understandest thou, which is not in us? (10) With us are both the grayheaded and very aged men, much elder than thy father. (11) Are the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee” (**Job 15:7-11**)?

12. According to Eliphaz, what has caused Job to turn his spirit against God?

*“(12) Why doth **thine heart** carry thee away? and what do thy eyes wink at, (13) That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth” (Job 15:12-13)?*

13. What type of man is Eliphaz discussing when he says man is filthy?

*“(14) What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? (15) Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. (16) How much more abominable and **filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water**” (Job 15:14-16)?*

14. What does Eliphaz want to show Job?

He wants to share the wisdom that has been passed down from the wise men of times past: *“(17) I will shew thee, hear me; and that which I have seen I will declare; (18) Which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid it: (19) Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them” (Job 15:17-19).*

Knowledge of God’s word is superior to the wisdom of the ancients (**Psalms 119:100**).

The ancients are not always right (**Isaiah 9:13-16**).

Though, if the older and wiser are righteous, their wisdom should be heard (**Proverbs 16:31** and **Job 12:12**).

15. What information from old does Eliphaz share with Job?

The wicked suffer, lose their good because of stretching their hands against God, he won’t be rich, the congregation of the hypocrites will be desolate, and they’re full of deceit. From what he’s said already, this is a steady charge and judgment on Job: *“(20) The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor. (21) A dreadful sound is in his ears: in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him. (22) He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the sword. (23) He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? he knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand. (24) Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle. (25) For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty. (26) He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers: (27) Because he covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks. (28) And he dwelleth in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps. (29) He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth. (30) He shall not depart out of darkness; the flame shall dry up his branches, and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away. (31) Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity: for vanity shall be his recompence. (32) It shall be accomplished before his time, and his branch shall not be green. (33) He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive. (34) For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery. (35) They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit” (Job 15:20-35).*

16. If you were Job, what would you do at this point?

Consider my ways (**Proverbs 15:31-33**, **Ezekiel 18:27-28**, **Haggai 1:5; 7**, **I Corinthians 11:27-32**, and **II Corinthians 13:5**).

I would cease arguing and defending myself at this point (**I Timothy 6:4**).

I would make sure I am not self-deceived (**Proverbs 30:12-13** and **I Corinthians 3:18**).

If my friends were wrong and would not repent, I would remove myself from them (**Matthew 7:6; 10:14**).

If I were wrong, I would correct my ways so that I would not perish (**Ezekiel 18:30**).

This is the right attitude (**Jeremiah 10:24**).

17. Does Job consider the words of his friend as helpful or harmful?

Harmful: “(2) *I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all. (3) Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest*” (**Job 16:2-3**)?

18. Did Job tell his friends he would handle the situation differently if he were in their places?

Yes: “(4) *I also could speak as ye do: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you. (5) But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief*” (**Job 16:4-5**).

19. Does Job believe he is in the hands of the ungodly because of his friends?

No, because of God: “(6) *Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged: and though I forbear, what am I eased? (7) But now he hath made me weary: thou hast made desolate all my company. (8) And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me: and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face. (9) He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me. (10) They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me. (11) **God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked***” (**Job 16:6-11**).

20. When chapter sixteen concludes, does Job finally stop blaming God for his calamity?

No, he continues to blame God and his friends too. We also see the back and forth continue wherein he doubts he is righteous in times past and now thinks he is punished for no reason and that his prayer is pure: “(12) *I was at ease, but **he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark. (13) His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground. (14) He breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me like a giant. (15) I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust. (16) My face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death; (17) Not for any injustice in mine hands: also my prayer is pure. (18) O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place. (19) Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high. (20) **My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God. (21) O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour! (22) When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return*****” (**Job 16:12-22**).